

UTAH

MINUTEMAN

2017 Volume 2



**Utah Gov. Gary Herbert sworn
in as Utah's 17th governor**

**UTNG Soldiers fill sand bags to help
northern Utah residents battle flood water**

**Utah Air Guard conducts crucial
aeromedical evacuation mission**

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Major General Jefferson Burton The Adjutant General

Service members and families of the Utah National Guard. I just returned from Washington, D.C. after participating in some high-level briefings

which showcased the outstanding performance of our Utah Air and Army Guard warriors. You continue to exceed the standards and to demonstrate what “right looks like.” I am incredibly proud of your resilience and work ethic, and feel honored to serve along side each one of you.

As we approach the summer months, we will find ourselves in field training environments more often. Training planning, resourcing, execution and documentation is now more important than ever! While we may be surrounded with distractions, make no mistake; we are in the business of developing READINESS for ground- and air-combat operations. We are either in combat, or training

for it-period! If you’re a Soldier, get acquainted with emerging training doctrine, like Objective T, and what it means to your unit’s readiness. If you’re an Airman, school yourself on training AFI’s so you can better support your team. Remember combat is unforgiving, and there is NO SECOND PLACE. We must be ready.

With increased training requirements, safety will take the forefront. Remember that everyone is responsible for safety! Training should be challenging and realistic, but losing one of our members to a training-related accident is unacceptable and can be avoided. While Composite Risk Management is the commander’s responsibility, every Soldier and Airman plays an important part in keeping their teammates safe. If you observe an unsafe act, call an immediate stand-down. Any service member can call a safety stand-down to avoid the loss of life, limb or eyesight. Together we will stand ready to answer our nation’s call, and to accomplish any mission.



Command Sergeant Major Michael Miller Senior Enlisted Comments

As I start a new mission, one of significant importance--at home, I am confident our team

will continue to train for the fight here and abroad. I would ask each of you to be ready. Be ready to respond, whether it’s for a state or national deployment. Be ready personally, ready at home, and ready in your area of responsibility. Ask yourself each time you don this remarkable uniform; am I ready, am I trained, am I disciplined to fight and win in this complex world? Is my flight, my squad, our platoon, brigade or wing ready? What can I influence now to ensure our team is ready? What we do today will impact tomorrow. Make sure your impact increases our individual readiness, while ensuring the force, our families, and employers are taken care of and are ready as well. Use every minute of training days to train, lead, and take care of our force.

With this being my last article, I want to take the opportunity to thank our adjutant general, who works every minute of every day for you, our Soldiers and Airmen. To our remarkable NCO Corps and the entire team; what each of you do is phenomenal and I am humbled to have had the opportunity to be on your team. To our civilians, our families and our employers; the success we enjoyed wouldn’t be possible without all of your untiring efforts on our behalf, thank you. To my wife Heidi, and kids, Hayden and Halle: thank you for what you stand for.

I wish Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Anderson and his family success, and I am confident he and the entire team will continue to reach even higher marks. I close with great emotion, yet proud to always be a Utah National Guard team member. Affect today for positive results tomorrow.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg

The Adjutant General

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Cover Photo:

A humvee carrying participants of the state Best Warrior Competition is hit by a simulated attack on Camp Williams, Utah, April 8, 2017. This event tested the competitor's reaction to attack while on convoy.

Photo by Capt. Brian Moss



Utah Guard Proud to Host Utah's 2017 Inaugural Ceremony



Utah Gov. Gary R. Herbert, right, with his wife holding the Bible, is sworn in as Utah's 17th governor.



Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox is administered the oath by Chief Justice Matthew Durrant on Jan. 4, 2017.

SALT LAKE CITY — As the clock struck eleven the audience hushed to an uncommon silence in the filled rotunda of the state Capitol where more than 1,200 leaders and citizens gathered to witness the 2017 inaugural ceremony of Utah's governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, treasurer, and auditor.

The reverent quiet in the large hall was broken as nearly a dozen bagpipes wailed from the entryway as the Salt Lake Scots performed *Highland Cathedral* to kick off the formal ceremony. The powerful sound waves permeated those in attendance as the procession of musicians methodically stepped through the aisle towards the stage.

As the pipers formed at the forefront of the stage, Utah's 23rd Army Band joined the number in the final verse as the music rose to a powerful and patriotic finish. The 23rd Army Band Commander, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Denny Saunders, conducted the fine men and women of the award-winning band throughout the ceremony. Music is an integral part of the inaugural ceremonies, and the 23rd Army Band is always tuned and ready to support our state's leadership.

The live-broadcast camera panned to the podium as Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, in his capacity as the master of ceremonies, greeted the audience and shared the elements of the program to come.

"In my role as Adjutant General of the Utah National Guard, it is my privilege to serve with Utah's Commander in Chief, Gov. Gary R. Herbert," said Burton later in his comments. "His efforts in the areas of homeland security and emergency preparedness have led the nation. Personally, I have greatly appreciated his support of our deploying Soldiers and Airmen."

The crowd then turned their attention to the Capitol's south entrance where the Utah Guard Honor Guard paced in. The joint Army and Air Honor Guard marched with precision and rhythm as they brought the American Flag to the forefront for honors to the nation as BYU's Vocal Point acapella group performed the *Star Spangled Banner*.

"I felt a sense of pride and ownership providing the team to conduct the posting of the Colors," said Staff Sgt. Gary Packer, senior noncommissioned officer of Utah's Honor



Gov. Gary R. Herbert's inaugural ceremony at the Utah Capitol began with bagpipes and the Utah National Guard 23rd Army Band opening the celebration with Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton as the master of ceremonies.



Gov. Gary R. Herbert and others were treated to a 19-gun salute in front of the Capitol and a flyover by the Guard's 1st Battalion, 145th Field Artillery and both 1st Battalion and 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation respectively on Jan. 4, 2017.



Guard, who has supported three such inaugural ceremonies. This ceremony, however, was special to Packer as he was able to work closely with both the incoming and the outgoing senior enlisted leaders of the Utah Guard for the event execution which he was certainly proud of. "Execution seemed to be flawless. I believe the entire team achieved all of its goals."

Colors posted and honors to the nation rendered, Burton proceeded with the program wherein Gov. Gary R. Herbert, Lt. Gov. Spencer J. Cox, Attorney General Sean D. Reyes,



Treasurer David C. Damschen, and Auditor John Dougall were sworn in publicly for their term of service. The ceremony was one of formality with oaths and speeches and celebration with musical numbers provided by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Orchestra at Temple Square which filled the rotunda.

"I love Utah—I always have—and after serving as governor and interacting with leaders from the other states I have come to appreciate more fully Utah's exceptionalism," said Herbert. In his inaugural speech he recognized the greatness of Utah and acknowledged the positive, contributing people and initiatives that make it so. "You may not always see it in yourselves, but the uncommon blend of your humility, your hard work, and your willingness to pull together, despite differences, defines the Utah spirit."

Following the enduring standing ovation at the conclusion of the governor's speech, the ceremony culminated as the official party moved to the front steps of the Capitol. Staring out upon the Salt Lake Valley in the brisk January air, Herbert was further honored with a 19-gun artillery salute executed with precision by members of Utah's 1st Battalion, 145th Field Artillery.

As the shots rang out, the thunderous noise was overshadowed by an approaching Apache and Black Hawk formation which came into view from the south. The flyover, provided by elements of Utah's 1st and 2nd Battalions, 211th Aviation, flew immediately over the Capitol as spectators panned their views to witness the spectacle.

There is no doubt the 2017 inaugural ceremony was an astounding success. This was due to tremendous efforts of Capitol staff, civic organizational support, and Utah's military. The Utah National Guard, whether it be with narration, dignitary escort, music, or military honors, was proud to once again support the inauguration of Utah's leadership. 🇺🇸

Story by Lt. Col. Steven Fairbourn

Photos by Ileen Kennedy, Chuck DeNovellis and 1st Sgt. Brock Jones

Utah Airmen Among National Guard Forces Supporting 2017 Presidential Inauguration

SALT LAKE CITY — Six members of the Utah Air National Guard's 151st Communications Flight provided support for the 58th Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C., Jan. 15-22.

The Airmen deployed their mobile Joint Incident Site Communication Capabilities (JISCC) package that enabled communications between support agencies, including military personnel and civil authorities, during the inauguration events.

Their main task was to establish the communications system for a security task force composed primarily of members of the Army National Guard, said 2nd Lt. Tyler Olsen, officer in charge of the JISCC.

"We're providing capabilities that the task forces wouldn't typically have in this kind of scenario and enabling effective communications," Olsen said. "Secondarily, we would provide communications in the event of an emergency that caused traditional communications to go down."

The group began preparing for the event in the Baltimore area, and arrived in the District of Columbia to set up their equipment the day before the inauguration. The JISCC was assigned to a government building that also housed Airmen and Soldiers from the National Guard.

The satellite dish and radio antennas were set up on the roof of the building, which had a beautiful view of the Washington Monument, according to Staff Sgt. Anthony Baca, a radio frequency transmission specialist with the 151st CF. This equipment provided essential phone, data, and radio communications via satellite to ensure everyone was able to complete their missions during inauguration day.

"The greatest capability of the JISCC package is the knowledge and expertise of our Airmen," Olsen said. "That is what makes it so valuable." 🇺🇸

Story by Capt. Chris Copeland

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Young



Staff Sgt. Anthony Baca, cyber support specialist, and Tech. Sgt. Bryan Scharman, noncommissioned officer in charge of cyber support; both with the Utah Air National Guard's 151st Communications Flight, set up communications between supported agencies during the 58th Presidential Inauguration. The Airmen were part of a 7,500 member team that supported civil authorities in Washington, D.C.

UTNG Soldiers Fill Sand Bags to Help Northern Utah Residents Battle Flood Water

TREMONTON, Utah — For two chilly days in February, more than 20 Utah National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Homeland Response Force, 97th Troop Command and the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, filled sand bags at the Box Elder County Fairgrounds in Tremonton, Feb. 22-23, in an effort to assist residents battling flood waters in northern Utah.

At the request of the State of Utah Emergency Operations Center, the Soldiers traveled to Tremonton armed with shovels and a sand-bag machine to fill sand bags for use by county residents as needed.

“For this particular operation, we’ve been asked by state and county officials to come up here primarily for sandbagging assistance,” said Capt. Lance Curzon, officer in charge of the sand-bagging operation. “We’re filling sand bags right now at the fairgrounds, allowing people to come pick up sand bags as they need them.”

In two days, Utah Soldiers and Airmen filled nearly 3,000 sand bags even given the challenges that Soldiers often encounter during operations like this.

“We have about 12 personnel right now, but we do have a sand bag machine that we’ve been using off and on,” said Curzon on the first day of operations. “We’ve had some challenges with the wet sand, but we’re going to continue to try and use that and get as many sand bags filled as we possibly can for the community.”

Stan Summers, Box Elder County Commissioner chair, admitted that it’s been a long month for residents and community leaders in Box Elder County.

“This just didn’t start a couple days ago; we’ve had flooding problems out west for some time,” said Summers. “We’ve really been working on this since January. As a county in the last 10 days, we’ve filled over 30,000 sand bags with 700 tons of sand.”

Flooding has been a problem in northern Utah this year due to quickly-melting snow and excessive rain.

“I want to give my heartfelt thanks... to everyone here for the incredible work that they’ve done to keep people safe and make sure the damage is restricted to as little area as possible,” said Utah Lieutenant Governor Spencer Cox during a press conference in Tremonton. “We’re grateful for all of the help, the volunteers, the tens of thousands of man hours filling sand bags, people working around the clock, people



Utah National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Homeland Response Force fill sand bags at the Box Elder County Fairgrounds in Tremonton, Feb. 22.

volunteering. Everybody’s working together and we just want them to know that the state of Utah is behind them 100 percent. Our resources are here at their disposal. We had a National Guard unit up here filling sand bags and they’ll continue to help through that. We’re in very good hands here in Box Elder County.”

Many of the Utah Guard Soldiers assigned to fill sand bags expressed gratitude at the opportunity to help their fellow Utahns.

“The Utah National Guard is comprised of members from across the state,” said 2nd Lt. Scott Kramer, a member of the Homeland Response Force who served as liaison officer during the operation, “and we are honored to be here to be able to help our communities.” 🇺🇸

Story and photos by 1st Sgt. Brock Jones

Family Assistance Centers

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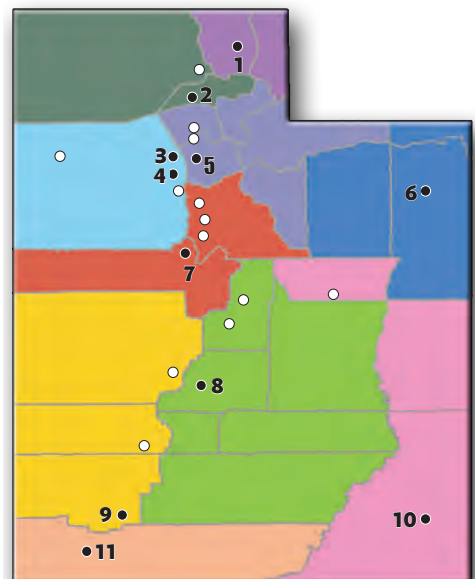
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3 • West Jordan 801-816-3577	7 • Spanish Fork 801-794-6011	11 • St. George 435-986-5417
4 • Bluffdale 801-878-5037	8 • Richfield 435-896-6442	○ Armory ● Armory • FAC



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Utah Air Guard Conducts Crucial Aeromedical Evacuation Mission

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah Air National Guard KC-135R Stratotanker and a six-person crew from the 151st Air Refueling Wing transported three patients to the U.S. from the Pacific theater to receive critical-medical care during an aeromedical evacuation mission Feb. 18-25.

After leaving Roland R. Wright Air National Guard Base, the Utah crew, consisting of two pilots, a boom operator and three crew chiefs, landed at Travis Air Force Base, (AFB) Calif., to pick up an active duty medical crew from the 375th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron (AES) from Scott Air Force Base, Ill., and reconfigure the aircraft.

“During the aeromedical evacuation (AE) they use the cargo and passenger carrying capabilities of the KC-135 to allow the aircraft to function as an ambulance,” said Maj. Phil Schembri, a pilot with the 151st ARW.

“Our primary mission is refueling, but we can also be configured to do this mission,” said Schembri. “We are being tasked to work with the active duty component to add to their capabilities.”

Once on the ground at Travis AFB, the aircrew and maintenance personnel worked with the members of the medical team to accomplish the set-up of the Stanchion Litter System for transporting patients on stretchers during the flight.

On the following day, the medical crew brought the rest of their equipment onto the aircraft and set up the systems needed to care for their patients while in transport.

“We have to make sure we have emergency oxygen and electrical equipment ready so that by the time we put on patients if there were something to go wrong right off the bat, then we have the tools and



1st Lt. Carol Roling, 375th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron flight nurse from Scott Air Force Base, Ill., takes a patient's blood pressure during an aeromedical evacuation flight from the Pacific theater to the U.S. on Feb. 21.

equipment to properly take care of that patient once they are on board the aircraft,” Maj. Joel Villavert, flight nurse with the 375th AES.

After stopping at Hickam AFB, Hawaii where several medical crew members traded places with personnel from the 18th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron from Kadena Air Base, Japan, the aircraft traveled to Guam to pick up the first patient.

Staff Sgt. Bill Nielson, a boom operator with the 151st ARW, said his job can become more chaotic during the medevac missions because there are so many more elements that he needs to take into consideration. During a refueling mission he said he only worries about one customer—the aircraft he is refueling.

“Our whole timing and clock rotates around the patients and the med group and getting them to the next place safely and on time,” said Nielson.

Having to coordinate so many moving parts can be challenging for the AE crew as well.



A patient is transferred from a Utah Air National Guard KC-135R to an ambulance after arriving at Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego on Feb. 24, 2017.

The flight nurse acting as medical crew director (MCD), oversees the mission, making sure the patients are loaded safely and there is safe patient care throughout the flight, said Maj. Wanda Greene, a flight nurse with the 18th AES, who acted as MCD during two of the legs of the AE mission. Additionally, the MCD is responsible for the overall coordination between the medical personnel, the aircrew, the patients and the ground elements at each stop along the way.

For flight nurses new to the MCD role, the most challenging part is “having to coordinate and integrate with so many moving pieces and parts and the irregularities that come along with it,” said Greene.

Greene added that there is always the potential for the unknown during AE missions and the crew needs to be prepared to react quickly and adapt to changing circumstances.

“Even though irregularities happen, we focus on keeping everyone informed and in the loop and then rallying everyone back together to make sure everyone is still on the same page,” said Greene.

Throughout the AE mission, the three crew chiefs with the 151st Maintenance Group kept the aircraft safe and ready to fly.

“We have to maintain the aircraft and do all the basic inspections to keep the jet flying, safe and always fully mission capable,” said Senior Airman McKell Tew, a crew chief with the 151st MXG.

Tew said that although her job is the same regardless of the mission they have been tasked with, she feels it is more rewarding to have the opportunity to provide this support to individuals in need of help.

After leaving Guam, they continued to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan to pick up two more patients.

One patient, due to the severity of the medical condition, required the addition of a Critical Care Air Transport Team. The CCATT is a three person team consisting of a doctor and a nurse that specialize in critical care as well as a respiratory therapist.

The AE crew and CCATT monitored and provided medical care to the patients throughout the flight from Kadena to Hickam AFB. Upon arrival, one patient stayed at the hospital there to receive further medical care. Several members of the AE crew also switched places with their counterparts before the flight left to transport the two remaining patients to Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego.

After the patients were transported from the aircraft to the hospital, the aircraft stopped at Travis AFB to drop off the AE crew and their equipment before returning to Salt Lake City.

Greene expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Utah aircrew and maintenance personnel.

“These guys were top notch! They worked with us really well, asked us what we needed, and what they could do,” she said. “They did extra to make the group comfortable.”

During the week long mission, the Utah jet and crew traveled a total of 16,000 miles said Master Sgt. George LaCome, crew chief with the 151st MXG.

“This makes us more well-rounded,” said Nielson. “It is a great mission for the Guard because it allows us to participate in the total force. We get to work with our active duty counterparts to do something different from our usual refueling mission.” 🇺🇸

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Annie Edwards



Maj. Phil Schembri, 151st Air Refueling Wing pilot, assists medical personnel from the 375th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron in reconfiguring a Utah's KC-135R to carry stretchers during an aeromedical evacuation mission on Feb. 18.



Maj. Phil Schembri, a pilot with the Utah Air National Guard's 151st Air Refueling Wing, flies a KC-135 Stratotanker during an aeromedical evacuation mission transporting patients from the Pacific theater to the U.S.

Utah Guardsmen and Firefighters Work with Moroccan Forces Training on Disaster Preparedness Activities

KENITRA, Morocco — **M**embers of the Utah National Guard and Utah's Unified Fire Authority spent time in Kenitra, sharing experience and expertise with applicable groups from the Royal Moroccan Forces during Sept. 2016.

Training was conducted on subjects such as managing crisis communications as a public-affairs officer, emergency-building shoring, and detecting and destroying explosive devices. The exchange was performed under guidelines for disaster preparedness activities as outlined by the Humanitarian Assistance Program, a program owned by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency—a component of the Department of Defense.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Steven A. Fairbourn, public affairs officer for the Utah National Guard, with Dominic C. Burchett and Gordon B. O'Harra III of Unified Fire Authority, conducted a public-information officer course for officers of the Royal Moroccan Forces.

Fairbourn remarked the group was “very receptive and open to concepts.” He had the group take part in an exercise that illustrated the necessity of cooperation between all responding agencies and authorities when responding to a crisis. Using only rubber bands with several strings attached, the groups were tasked with forming a tower of cups from a pile of cups. The task proved difficult and could only be accomplished with cooperation and clear communication.

The culmination of the PIO course was mock-media interviews in which the Moroccan officers were given scenarios with limited amounts of information (just as any spokesperson would have limited amounts of information in the early stages of a crisis), then interviewed by a small crowd of ‘media’ personnel. The bright video camera lights, the tough questions and the pressing tone of the media made for a fairly realistic exercise. Perhaps a bit surprisingly, the most junior officer in the group was among the best performers in the scenario; sticking very well to what the course had taught and keeping calm under pressure.

Just a few rooms away, another class taught detecting and destroying explosive devices and administering first aid.

“They’re very engaged. They pick up instruction well,” said Army Staff Sgt. Timothy P. Geary from Utah Medical Detachment, who served as one of the trainers for the class, and commenting on the success of the training.

This was evident through the practical exercises. The first aid exercise had casualties bandaged up properly and dummies successfully resuscitated to their normal state. The explosives exercise also displayed success. The target device was removed from its location within the classroom and taken outside through a window via quickly-set rigging the trainees had set up.

Still outside, but a short walk away, another group received training on search-and-rescue techniques – specifically shoring structurally-compromised buildings to prepare them for entry of rescue personnel.



A building shored by Royal Moroccan Forces stands safely in place after the forces put to work the training they had just received from members of the Utah National Guard, Unified Fire Authority and Task Force One.

John C. Maddux, a Utah Search and Rescue heavy-rigging specialist, rescue squad officer, and rescue team manager, there to lead the search-and-rescue training, said, “They enjoy learning the techniques. They’ve completed each day’s objective, and they continue to progress as we give them more-complicated stuff to work on.”

The group successfully rigged shoring materials against exterior and interior walls, under a second-level floor, and in doorways and windows, which could allow rescue personnel to safely enter a structure to extract injured people from a damaged building.

Army Capt. Kal T. Larsen, operations officer for the Utah National Guard’s Chemical-Biological-Radiological-Nuclear Enhanced Response Force Package, explained the necessity for the shoring training.

“The emphasis is that we want to make sure a building is safe before we go into it,” said Larsen, “because if someone goes in and gets hurt, that person is then a part of the problem rather than the solution.”

The concept of delaying rescue to ensure the safety of rescue personnel may have been a bit of a new concept for the anxious trainees.

“They’re willing and eager to take what we have to offer and run with it,” said Larsen. “These guys are great to work with. They’re motivated.”

A recurring theme across all the training was the value of the partnership between the nations.

“As we progress, the relationships just seem to completely build and grow,” said Maddux. “People start knowing people by first names—rather than just a military salute, it’s ‘How’s it going?’ with an arm around the shoulders.”

“After everything is said and done, one of the most important things we’re doing here is building relationships,” said Larsen. “In the long run, the techniques and tactics may change, but hopefully the relationships we’ve built here will stand the test of time.”

Army Capt. K. Andrew Wade, operations officer for 97th Troop Command and coordinator for the Utah National Guard’s portion of DCSA’s Humanitarian Assistance Program, outlined the benefits of involving UFA and Task Force One personnel in the mission.

“We’ve built so many relationships with Utah first-responders that it has improved the National Guard’s mission” said Wade. “We’ve been able to bridge gaps through the first-responders’ involvement in the program. It’s a huge win for everybody in the state.”

Wade went on to explain how the training sessions benefited not only the trainees, but the trainers as well, by placing them in environments unlike what they traditionally encounter in Utah, thereby expanding their ability to respond in a variety of situations, making Utah a better, safer place.



Utah National Guard Soldiers train Royal Moroccan Forces as they learn and discuss best practices for public information officers to communicate to the public through the media in response to a crisis.

Army Lt. Col. Reece D. Roberts, administrative officer for 97th Troop Command and assistant commander for the UTNG’s portion of the HAP/DPP, illustrated the future for the program.

“We recently revised a five-year training plan to place more priority on the key tasks and objectives identified by their commander, Col. Bejjhi, and their headquarters,” said Roberts. “That includes progressive and standards-based events building toward certification and international recognitions. It also includes synchronizing the various programs provided by the U.S. military to this unit.”

“The long-term goal for the Moroccan military is to become an international domestic and emergency response training center. They continue to make large investments in infrastructure, equipment, and personnel toward that end and each time we go back we see the positive results of those efforts. The Soldiers, Airmen, and interagency participants we are working with, in both the U.S. and the Moroccan elements, are committed professionals overcoming every obstacle to achieve that goal.”

Roberts also shared similar sentiments to others, stating, “While we are pleased with the opportunity we have to work with and help develop this capability in Morocco, we are also gaining great benefit for the UTNG and the citizens of Utah as we work hand-in-hand with Utah Task Force 1, Unified Fire Authority, and the state and county emergency planning and response agencies. The professional relationships that continue to develop with the individuals and leaders of those organizations have enhanced our preparedness in the Homeland Response Force (HRF) and will prove invaluable as we respond to state emergencies with them.” 🇺🇸

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Quentin J. Hendriksen

640th RTI Hosts FORSCOM, NGB CSMs for MLC Graduation



Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton talks with Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder, at the 640th Regional Training Institute.

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — The 640th Regional Training Institute hosted Command Sgt. Maj. Scott C. Schroeder, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Forces Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Kepner, command sergeant major of the Army National Guard, Jan. 18-20, 2017.

The senior-enlisted leaders were in town to participate in a Master Leader Course (MLC) graduation ceremony of a group of Soldiers consisting of Forces Command and National Guard senior noncommissioned officers. While in Utah, Schroeder and Kepner also received capabilities briefings from each major command of the Utah National Guard.

“CSM Schroeder was in town specifically for the graduation of the U.S. Army Forces Command Soldiers in the course,” said Sgt. Maj. Jared Gale,

commandant of the 640th RTI. “This specific course was for the prospective FORSCOM cadre that will be required to facilitate MLC on active-duty installations.” Gale added that CSM Kepner came out for the graduation because he is deeply involved with the professional education of Guard Soldiers.

MLC is a relatively new course in the Army’s Noncommissioned Officer Education System. The first iteration of MLC was piloted in Fort Bliss, Texas, in October 2015, and the 640th RTI has been at the forefront of the development of the course since then, according to Gale.

“The 640th RTI and the Army Reserve Readiness Training Center both sent four instructors to go through the course and help with follow-on facilitation requirements,” said Gale. Master Sgt. Tamara Sower, 1st Sgt. Norman Rentschler, Sgt. Maj. Shawn Blanke (master sergeant at the time), and Sgt. Maj. Gale (also a master sergeant at the time) were the 640th RTI Soldiers who attended that first pilot course.

“In January 2016, the second pilot of MLC was conducted at Camp Williams. This pilot was utilized to both train our new instructors at the 640th as well as identify other potential instructors within the class,” said Gale. “Since the time Utah Soldiers left the first pilot in Texas, they have been deeply involved in helping develop and vet the materials for the follow-on MLC iterations.”

It was only fitting, therefore, that FORSCOM would send its active-duty Soldiers to complete MLC here in Utah.

“When Soldiers need to be trained, the 640th RTI has always stepped up to help with the requirements,” Gale said. “National Guard Bureau has consistently looked at the 640th RTI as a solution to training issues. To my knowledge, the Regiment has never said no to additional training requirements or standing up new courses,” he said. “We are in the business of training the leaders of our Army, and we take that charge very seriously.”

Story and photos by 1st Sgt. Brock Jones



Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder, command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Forces Command, addresses Soldiers at the completion of a Master Leader Course held at Camp Williams.

Utah Air Guard Establishes New Intel Unit

SALT LAKE CITY — **T**he Utah Air National Guard recognized the stand up of a new unit, the 151st Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group, with a ribbon cutting ceremony at Roland R. Wright Air National Guard base here on March 4, 2017.

The 151st ISRG, an expansion of the 169th Intelligence Squadron, will provide remote processing, exploitation, and dissemination of intelligence information as part of the Air Force Distributed Common Ground System.


Although the transition to group status has brought no change in the unit's mission, it will bring some new opportunities for the unit and the Utah Air Guard, said Lt. Col. Darrin Ray, commander of the 151st ISRG.

"The 151st Air Refueling Wing now includes five groups and the presence of a group commander in the 151st ISRG gives the organization a seat at the 'Big Table' in the Air Force DCGS community, where policy is often set for the community that we had very little say in previously," said Ray.

The 169th IS, first established in the Utah Air National Guard in 1987 as an electronic security squadron, began the formal process to become a group in 2011. They became federally recognized as the 151st ISRG on Feb. 17, 2017. This new group consists of the 169th Intelligence Squadron, the 151st Intelligence Support Squadron and the group command staff.

"The group construct allows for more focused efforts for each squadron in their respective mission sets," said Ray.

He added that it will also open up new opportunities for leadership positions for both officers and enlisted personnel.

"Utah is well postured to accept an increase in any of our primary missions, including intelligence support, should the U.S. need it to strengthen national security," said Col. Kristin Streukens, commander of the 151st ARW. "History has proven that if you give a mission to the Utah Air National Guard, we will accomplish it well." 

Story by By Tech. Sgt. Annie Edwards

From left: Col. Kristin Streukens, 151st Air Refueling Wing commander; Lt. Col. Darrin Ray, 151st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group commander; and Brig. Gen. Christine Burckle, Utah Air National Guard commander, cut the ribbon during the 151st Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group stand-up ceremony at the Roland R. Wright Air National Guard Base Mar. 4.



Col. Kristin Streukens, 151st Air Refueling Wing commander, hands the 151st Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group guidon to Lt. Col. Darrin Ray, 151st ISRG commander, during the unit stand-up ceremony.





Airman Takes Home Title of Utah Best Warrior in First-Ever, Army-Air Competition

“The Best Warrior Competition assesses who is the best warrior in each of the MACOMs [major commands] throughout the state in the Air and Army National Guard,” said 1st Sgt. John Oldroyd, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the competition. “We’re doing this to live the motto, ‘We train as we fight.’ Any time we go down range it’s a joint environment, so we’re trying to work together to enhance our ability to operate in that environment.”

Participants were selected earlier this year by their major commands via a rigorous selection process and represent the best each MACOM has to offer.

“It’s really an honor to compete in the Best Warrior Competition. Just fostering joint operations with both the Air and the Army National Guard—the fact that we get to do all this tough, realistic training is astounding,” said Spc.

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah. — **B**attling wind, rain, hail, and snow, members of the Utah National Guard concluded the annual competition to determine the best warriors in the state.

It was the first time the Air Guard participated in the event. Seven members of the Utah Air National Guard joined 26 Soldiers for the competition that spanned three days, April 7-9. Soldiers and Airmen, enlisted and officer, junior and senior—32 in all—spent 48 mostly-sleepless hours demonstrating their warrior skills in the elements and mud over the weekend.

When the results were tallied, a Utah Air Guard member was named Utah Best Warrior: Airman 1st Class Kelley Barney, 151st Security Forces Squadron. Noncommissioned Officer of the Year honors went to Sgt. Peter Wiedmeier, 65th Field Artillery Brigade. 1st Sgt. Garrett Whatcott took home the title of Senior NCO of the Year, while 1st Lt. Gregory Barnes, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, won the Officer of the Year distinction.

Justin Ascione, a healthcare specialist assigned to the 144th Area Support Medical Company.

“Any time we have a chance to collaborate with other organizations and to have training, education and experiences that are outside what we do everyday, it just helps us grow our ability to be effective leaders,” said Command Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Hooper, wing command chief for the 151st Air Refueling Wing. “The relationships our Airmen are building with Soldiers today will be relationships they’ll be able to count on in the future when they become senior leaders,” he said.

This year also marked the first time officers competed.

“It’s been very exciting, good training opportunities for things I’ve never done before. I’m just excited to be out here representing my unit,” said 1st Lt. Ryan Close, platoon leader, Delta Company, 1-211th Aviation Regiment.

“What’s great about this competition is that you get to see people from other commands, you get to see a lot of different approaches to these problems we’ve been given, you get the opportunity to shine if you can and if you want to,” said 1st Lt. Gavin McGraw, one of the six officers who participated. McGraw is a simulations officer in the 410 Main Command Post—Operational Detachment.

This year’s competition was also significant because it will be the last for Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller, who has overseen six state Best Warrior competitions during his time as the senior enlisted adviser in the Utah National Guard.



Utah Air and Army National Guard Soldiers compete at the 2017 state Best Warrior Competition at Camp Williams April 7-9. Events consisted of a ruck march, warrior tasks, battle drills, a written test and boards, Army Physical Fitness Test, and a mystery event.

“It’s a little emotional,” said Miller. “What the team does and what the competitors do every year is phenomenal, and it brings a lot of pride and a lot of emotion to see them leave everything they have out on the field.”

The incoming senior enlisted adviser, Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Anderson, gives Miller much of the credit for developing the Best Warrior Competition.

“Five years ago, this competition was little more than a board and a physical fitness test, and maybe a weapons qualification,” said Anderson. It has turned into a world-class event that Sgt. Maj. Miller has built from the ground up.”





This year's participants met the challenge of a well-developed set of tasks, as well as unprecedented weather challenges.

"The weather was great," said Tech. Sgt. Christopher Cook with a chuckle. "The first day was nice when we were doing all our written tests and formal boards. As soon as we went out in the field it got windy and cold. Saturday, the wind really picked up and blew in a nasty storm throughout the entire day." Cook is a logistics management specialist assigned to the 151st Air Refueling Wing.

"It sucks, and I love every second of it," said Tech. Sgt. Tarra Sliwa, an aerospace medical services technician with 151st Medical Group, Utah Air National Guard.

Wiedmeier and Spc. John Cullen, 19th Special Forces Group, who took second place overall in the competition, will represent Utah as the Utah Army National Guard NCO and Soldier of the Year, respectively, during the regional Best Warrior competition, hosted by the California National Guard at Camp Parks, Calif., in May. 🇺🇸

*Story by Sgt. 1st Class Richard Stowell
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Whitney Houston, Spc. Nathanel Free,
Tech Sgt. Joe Davis, and Capt. Brian Moss*





Utah National Guard Soldiers and Boy Scouts fill food bins with donations for local food banks during Scouting for Food.

Guard Helps Fill Utah Food Banks During Scouting for Food Drive

DRAPER, Utah — The Utah Guard helped local Boy Scout troops gather food from neighborhoods across Utah for local food banks in their annual Scouting for Food drive, March 18, 2017.

This annual event not only provides meals to needy families, but also gives service members the opportunity to serve the communities they live in.


“We’re having a good time,” said 2nd Lt. David Chan, 141st Military Intelligence Battalion. “We want to give back to the community. I really feel it fulfills the oath we took when we joined [the Guard].”

According to the Utah Food Bank, one in seven people in Utah faces hunger. In 2016, the Utah Food Bank helped provide 38 million meals for those in need, with Scouting for Food gathering 122 tons of food last year. According to Utah Food Bank’s Heidi Cannella, the amount of food donated this year should exceed the amount given in 2016.

“It gives the Scouts a chance to really see how much they’re helping and everything we’re doing,” said Sgt. 1st Class Erik Andersen, 142nd MI Battalion. “People donate a bag of food, but so do their neighbors. It all adds up and we gather literally tons of food.”

While Guard units are tasked with providing Soldiers and Airmen to serve during the event, many of the service members participating are volunteers coming from every level of leadership within their units. Working together in small groups at the donation sites, leaders are able to work more closely with junior enlisted Soldiers and build camaraderie between all levels of their organizations.

“As a senior leader, it’s really great,” said Andersen. “I get to meet a lot of junior Soldiers that I might be assigned and it lets us work together.”

While Scouting for Food is one of the largest food donation events the Utah Food Bank holds, there are other financial and food drives throughout the year to ensure they can continue to feed the needy all year round. To get involved, the food bank has several suggestions on their website at utahfoodbank.org. 

*Story and photos by Sgt. Ariel Solomon
Photos by 1st Sgt. Brock Jones*



Soldiers load crates onto trucks to transport food donations to local food banks during Scouting for Food March 18.

Utah Guard Soldiers and Airmen Prove Themselves Worthy of the German Armed Forces Badge

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — As heavy snow fell on Camp Williams, Soldiers and Airmen lumbered across the finish line of the ruck march, soaked in both sweat and melted snow. Though tired and wet, they were happy, having completed their two-day quest to earn the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, or GAFPB, Jan. 24-25.

The event, hosted by the Utah Guard's 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, drew Soldiers and Airmen from all Utah Guard's major commands, as well as Reserve Soldiers from nearby units. German Army Sgt. Maj. Mattias Wendorff, currently stationed at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., as the U.S. Intelligence Center of Excellence German liaison sergeant major, oversaw the event.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Parke, Utah National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, wears the gold German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency he earned on Jan. 25.

Participants take to the water for the uniformed-swim event of the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, at the West Valley City Family Fitness Center, West Valley City, Utah, Jan. 24.





events: 100-meter in-uniform swim; first-aid test; reaction to nuclear, biological, chemical attack; pistol qualification and timed road march. The BFT is made up of three events: a shuttle sprint, flexed-arm hang, and a 1000-meter run. Based on how well they do in each event, participants earn a gold, silver or bronze badge.

“We’ve got three different badges or colors—bronze, silver and gold—and to achieve the

A participant shoots a M9 Berretta 9-mm pistol during the shooting event of the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, at a range on Camp Williams, Utah, Jan. 24.

“I’m happy to be here to support you guys,” Wendorff said, adding that he was delighted to assist Utah service members in earning the GAFPB given that it’s “one of the badges which is allowed for you guys to wear on your uniform.”

To earn the GAFPB, participants have to complete tasks in two main categories: Military Training and the Basic Fitness Test. The military-training portion consists of five

gold one, you have to be an all-around Soldier,” Wendorff said, “not specifically a runner or a shooter, but an all-around Soldier. And at the end of the day, it’s difficult to get the gold badge,” he said.

At the award ceremony following the ruck march, Wendorff pinned 27 gold, 29 silver, and 8 bronze medals onto the collars of Utah Soldiers and Airmen. Out of the 77 participants who started the event, 64 completed all required events and walked away with badges.



Competitors of the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency participate in the timed road march, flexed-arm hang event and swim test during two-days of events Jan. 24-25.



Tech Sgt. Berkeley Ward, Staff Sgt. Christopher Cook, Tech Sgt. Andrew Williams, Tech Sgt. Seth Mayer, and Staff Sgt. Eric Bornemeier, Utah Air National Guard, proudly display the badges and certificates they earned during the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, following the award ceremony at Camp Williams, Utah, Jan. 25.

“I thought the swimming would be easy because I swim quite often, and that event really kicked my trash,” said Staff Sgt. James Bybee, an intelligence sergeant with 19th Special Forces Group, who earned a gold badge. “I did fairly well, but still, swimming with your clothes on is a drag.”

Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Cook, 151st Logistics Readiness Squadron, 151st Air Refueling Wing, who earned the gold GAFPB, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to compete and represent the Air Force and the Utah Air Guard.

“Being able to compete and represent the United States Air Force and the Air National Guard here in Utah is something that hasn’t been done in the past,” said Cook, who was the noncommissioned officer of the year for the Utah Air National Guard in 2016. “It’s something that we’re really excited to be able to be invited to and to compete in and showcase the strengths we have as Airmen,” he said. “It’s something you can take with you throughout your career.”

Sgt. Christy Layne, Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment, said she was honored to be able to compete for a GAFPB for both personal and professional reasons.

“It helps me in my military career because I’m a new NCO, and it gives me the chance to develop my leadership qualities and physical attributes so I can motivate and lead other Soldiers as well,” said Lane, who earned the silver badge. “I’m honored to be able to be here and to compete, and I look forward to doing it again so I can get gold in all events.”

Wendorff expressed pleasure in being able to help Utah Soldiers and Airmen earn the GAFPB.

“What I love, at the end of the day, are the smiles of all these guys. They all appreciate the chance to get this badge,” said Wendorff. “I heard some stories about how they have been trying to get this badge for the last six or seven years and now, finally, they did it. It’s a pleasure to be here to support you guys.”

For those competitors who didn’t earn the badge they hoped for, and for Soldiers and Airmen who would like an opportunity to earn the GAFPB, the Utah Guard is likely to host future opportunities to earn the badge. According to 1st Lt. Matthew McPhee, officer in charge of this year’s event, they hope to make the event a yearly occurrence. 🇺🇸

Story by 1st Sgt. Brock Jones

Photos by 1st Sgt. Brock Jones and Sgt. 1st Class Richard Stowell



German Armed Forces Badges for Military Proficiency line a table in the Readiness Center at Camp Williams, Utah, Jan. 25.

TAG Symposium 2017: New Era for Family Readiness

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — Each year, the Utah National Guard holds the TAG Symposium to discuss matters of family readiness. This year's conference, held at the 640th Regional Training Institute at Camp Williams Feb. 4, focused on the "new era" that family readiness programs are entering and how the Guard is making a push to be proactive in its family readiness group (FRG) programs.

"I think we're one of the few states that actually holds the symposium," said Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, adjutant general of the Utah National Guard. "The reason we do it is we feel it is important for service members and spouses to know about these programs. At the very least, I want leaders to know where they can find these resources so they can help their people."

Ron Sukenick, a speaker at the symposium, asked Soldiers and Airmen in attendance what the idea of a new era in family readiness meant to them. Many tables responded that it was time for the Guard to be proactive in building relationships between units and their service members' families. Others pointed out that it was time to address methods that were ineffective, and destroy the stigmas surrounding mental illness to ensure families and service members get help they need.


"The new era means to me improving upon what's out there and engaging with families. Make resources more available to families and basically create a dialog. As a commander, I want to be engaged with FRG issues that come up," said Capt. Walter Henriquez, commander of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 211th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion.

Sherri Workman, who helped organize the symposium, expressed how the world is changing and how it is important for the Guard to change with it. Guard families are geographically spread throughout the state, and because of that, the Guard has challenges that active duty doesn't deal with and must adapt existing programs to better serve our needs, Workman said.

The importance of assigning active and engaged people to the FRG was stressed by several conference speakers.

"To get to the new era, we need to up the ante, and you've got to love the people you're with," said Sukenick. "We need for FRG groups to be proactive in inviting family members to volunteer and become more involved with the unit to build the community within the unit."

Henriquez explained the role of the FRG needs to deal with the issues a family might face before a deployment and get them well prepared beforehand so the families can focus on providing love and support to their service member while he or she is away.

"We have this [conference] every year because it brings together commands, both Air and Army, officer and enlisted, and our volunteers who do so much for our families," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller, command sergeant major of the Utah Guard. "It gives us an opportunity to learn about the programs that are available for service members and their families. It also allows us to thank those who work so hard for service members." 



Utah Air and Army National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, along with Family Readiness volunteers, attend the TAG Symposium Camp Williams, Utah in the 640th RTI auditorium on Feb. 4, 2017.



Top down: Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton, right, and Col. David Osborne, present a gift and a coin to Ron Sukenick, a Vietnam War veteran and keynote speaker at the 2017 TAG Symposium. A Utah National Guard Family Readiness volunteers is presented an award by Maj. Gen. Jefferson Burton during the TAG Symposium, Feb. 4, 2017.

*Story and photos by Sgt. Ariel Solomon
Photos by Mr. Chuck DeNovellis*

Utah Biathlon Team Dominates at Western Championships

CASPER, Wyoming — Utah National Guard biathletes braved frigid temperatures, high altitude, and a course that was often described by participants as “brutal,” to bring home medals in every event at the Chief, National Guard Bureau Western Region Biathlon Championships, held in Casper, Wyo., Jan. 9-15, 2017.

Often confused with triathlon (swim, bike, run), biathlon is an Olympic sport that combines Nordic ski racing with precision marksmanship. Biathletes are required to use freestyle, skate-ski techniques to navigate courses that typically require long, uphill climbs followed by fast, technical descents, all while carrying a rifle on their backs. Then, depending on the race format, they must hit very small targets from either a prone or standing position with penalty laps required for each miss. Due to the challenges inherent in the sport, many athletes consider Nordic ski racing and biathlon as two of the most difficult sports in the world.

The Utah National Guard maintains a robust and very active biathlon program led by three-time Olympian and coach, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Teela. Teela has created a diverse and aggressive training program that often includes team workouts one to two times a week at locations ranging from Camp Williams to the Soldier Hollow Olympic venue. This increased focus on training and development attracted talented Soldier-athletes from units both inside and outside of Utah and prepared the Utah team particularly well for the severe challenges faced in Casper.

Taking advantage of a full year of focused training, the Utah Women’s Biathlon Team produced best-ever results in the Western Regional races, dominating the podium in both the Sprint and Pursuit Races. Capt. Barbara Blanke, Utah Medical Command, won gold in both races followed closely by first-year biathlete, Sgt. Samantha Miller, also of the Utah Medical Command. Miller, in her first National-Guard-sponsored event, won silver medals in both races with solid shooting and aggressive hill climbing. Utah Air Guard’s ‘All-Guard’ biathlete, Staff Sgt. Trish Rich from the 191st Air Refueling Squadron, also turned in strong performances in both races to capture bronze medals for Utah. Predictably, Blanke, Miller, and Rich also won the overall awards for their combined-medal performances in the individual races.

In the Men’s Pursuit race, Teela stepped away from the coach’s box for one race to join the fray, and posted Utah’s best performance in the men’s field. Teela won the silver medal among a particularly difficult Western Regional field; a field that included Army Spc. Travis Cooper, who was on his way to Europe to join the International Biathlon Union (a European professional Biathlon organization) race series, and Capt. Robert Killian, best known for winning the Army Best Ranger Competition last year.

Members of the Utah National Guard Biathlon Team compete at the National Guard Bureau Western Region Biathlon Championships held in Casper, Wyo., Jan. 9-15.





"I jumped into this race to motivate and push [Spc.] Cooper," remarked Teela, commenting on his participation in the race. "My only disappointment is that there are not more young athletes in the National Guard biathlon program that are racing faster; we need to find a way to fix that." Teela was referring to the National Guard biathlon program's stated mission to identify and prepare talented athletes to represent the United States in international and Olympic competition.

In the 10-kilometer Sprint race, Maj. Dan Morken, Joint Force Headquarters, posted the best shooting of any athlete at the competition and earned a bronze medal in the process. Morken squared off against Killian, a seasoned competitor he has faced several times in the past. Morken used outstanding marksmanship and skilled course management to finish ahead of Killian, but it was a battle.

"Killian is a ferocious competitor, and [although] he was able to ski faster up some of the steeper hills on the course, I skied fewer penalty loops on the range," said Morken, commenting about his race strategy. "It was a close race; I lost count of how many times we traded the lead and, by the end, we were only separated by seconds."

Utah had other notable performances during the week of competition. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Eric Kreitzer, 211th Aviation Regiment and Sgt. Maj. Shawn Blanke, 640th Regiment both had top-ten finishes in the men's races. Additionally, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Evan Ahlborn and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Nicholai Wedekind, both from the 211th Aviation, and Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Robison, Utah Training Center, consistently placed in the top twenty-five in a very large field.

In March, the Utah Biathlon Team will travel to Jericho, Vt., to compete in the Chief, National Guard Bureau Biathlon National Championships. Utah will send very strong teams to Jericho with the goal of bringing home medals and team titles back to Utah. 🇺🇸

Story by Sgt. Maj. Shawn Blanke

A Global Discussion: 28th Annual MI Language Conference

DRAPER, Utah — The 300th Military Intelligence Brigade hosted the 28th Annual Language Conference at the Utah National Guard Headquarters on March 4.

The conference was themed “A Global Discussion,” and presented a multilateral forum for linguists from every branch of the U.S. military to discuss the latest in language learning and cultural awareness. The conference also featured many keynote speakers from universities, cryptological schools, and the intelligence community.

Col. Joseph Green, commander of the 300th MI, introduced the theme of the conference by talking about a turning point in his military career. While serving in Afghanistan, he targeted insurgent Taliban communications and overheard them discussing “logs and donkeys.” He didn’t understand what was going on until he figured out that they were talking about mortar tubes and coalition forces’ Humvees.

“That’s the kind of operating environment our linguists have to work with these days,” said Green.

“Linguists are not competent solely in their ability to provide language translations and interpretations,” said Brig. Gen. Kevin C. Wulfhorst, assistant deputy chief of staff, Army Intelligence Office, in his opening keynote address to the 500 or more attendees. “They are MI Soldiers and civilians that understand our core-intelligence functions, allowing them to assess both friendly and enemy operations and provide the ‘so-what’ to commanders to support their decision making.”

Linguists are equipped to not only assess what the enemy might do, but also to provide a deeper, nuanced understanding of how they think, said Wulfhorst. It is important to understand the context, culture, and history of a language, in order to optimize linguists’ potential.

“It is often said that in hearing someone speak, you gain insight into who they are, and what they are thinking,” said Wulfhorst. “This is because language is an indelible tenant and outward manifestation



The 141st Military Intelligence Battalion was recognized as the Command Language Program of the Year at the 28th annual Language Conference.

141st MI Awarded Command Language Program of the Year

DRAPER, Utah. — The 141st Military Intelligence Battalion, 300th MI Brigade, was recognized for improving the overall effectiveness of its linguists and received the Command Language Program of the Year award at the 28th Annual Language Conference on March 4, 2017, at the Utah National Guard headquarters in Draper.

In addition to being the venue for handing out the award, the two-day language conference was a multilateral forum for military and civilian linguists from around the country to discuss the latest in language learning and cultural awareness, themed “A Global Discussion.”

“It all comes down to the Soldiers, their dedication to the American people, and to the Utah National Guard,” said Lt. Col. John Darrington, commander of the 141st MI Battalion. “I love them, love their support, love what they did. This is their award.”

From October 2015 to September 2016, the 141st MI Battalion became a case study for its dramatic increase in the number of linguists who scored exceptionally well on the Defense Language Proficiency Test, said Col. Joseph W. Green, commander of the 300th MI Brigade. Thirty percent of the linguists scored a three in both listening and reading for their assigned control language, the highest possible score.

The 141st MI Battalion completed more than 12,000 hours of language training while also providing more than 8,000 hours of additional, real-world translation support for the National Guard Counterdrug Program, U.S. Southern Command, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command.

“Readiness is number one,” said Brig. Gen. Thomas C. Fisher, Land Component commander of the Utah Army National Guard, during his opening remarks to conference attendees. “What you do at this conference, to hone your skills, to be individually ready, and to make the intel community collectively ready to support the maneuver commander and win the warfight is extremely important.” 🇺🇸

of culture. It reflects everything the speakers are, and everything they have been.”

The theme for this year’s conference was a continuation of last year’s theme, “Speak the Culture,” said 1st Lt. Charles Beckman, command-language-program manager for the 300th MI, and the officer in charge of planning, coordinating and executing this year’s conference. The three major elements that were factored into this year’s event were language requirements, current events and training resources, said Beckman.

“One of the major goals was to provide emphasis and shed light on those three elements,” he said. “And we do that through plenary sessions in the mornings; we have breakouts that narrow down into specific topics, and then the panel we did today was on current events on a global scale.”

Experts in political science, history and foreign policy took questions from service members during the open panel. Dr. Anna Vassilieva, professor from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies; Dr. Kirk W. Larsen, associate professor of history at Brigham Young University; and Dr. Eric Hyer, associate professor in the department of political science at BYU, each shed light on what really motivates countries like Russia, China and North Korea.

“This year the focus was on how a linguist’s capabilities really influences strategy and tactics on the battlefield,” Beckman said. “People that are really invested in foreign culture, and understand the language and the culture behind the language, are more apt to be able to understand the motivations and know when to exercise restraint, to know the difference between grandstanding and an actual threat.”

Dr. Jeannie L. Johnson, assistant professor in the political science department at Utah State University and former member of the Balkan Task Force working within the CIA’s Directorate of Intelligence, spoke on “Blind Spots in U.S. Foreign Language Strategy.”

“We will never be really good at counterinsurgency until we have a medal for restraint,” said Johnson.

The main goal of this conference is to take language learning outside of the classroom experience, said Beckman. “It’s about understanding the deep cultural significance in expression, and how language is expressed as a function of culture. And if we can get people more engaged in the culture behind their language, and not so focused on the language itself, that would be a huge measure of success for the event.”

One of the topics in consideration for next year’s conference is “Language in Cyberspace,” because language in text is an entirely different vernacular, said Beckman.

“The goal for this conference is to have a lasting impact on the language community for the entire Department of Defense,” said Beckman. “And anyone that is interested in participating in that initiative should come next year.” 🇺🇸

*Story by Spc. Nathaniel Free
Photos by Sgt. Scott Vargas*



Linguists from all branches of the military meet with representatives from various language services about the programs they offer to improve language proficiency, March 4.



Soldiers, Airmen and civilians pack the auditorium of the Utah National Guard headquarters in Draper, Utah, to hear keynote speakers during the MI Language Conference.



Command Sgt. Major Sheldon Chandler, 780th Military Intelligence Brigade, from Fort George G. Meade, Md., addresses a room full of linguists during the 28th annual Language Conference in Draper, Utah.

UTANG Recognizes 2016 Airman of the Year Winners

SALT LAKE CITY — **M**ore than 30 Airmen from the Utah Air National Guard were recognized for outstanding achievement during 2016, at the Airman of the Year Banquet held Jan. 21, at the Utah Cultural Center in West Valley, Utah.

Retired Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Gerald R. Murray addressed the group of nearly 230 military and civilian guests at the ceremony. Murray encouraged the Airmen to build a culture of accountability and take personal responsibility for the success of the Utah Air Guard's mission.

The award nominees were chosen by their units in recognition of their achievements throughout the year. "We select winners based on contributions in the categories of leadership, self-improvement, character, conduct, and willingness to achieve unit, group, wing, Air National Guard and Air Force goals," said Col. Kristin Streukens, commander of the 151st Air Refueling Wing.

The Following is a list of the 2016 recipients:

- **Airman of the Year:** Staff Sgt. Dakota Trujillo, 151st Maintenance Group
- **Noncommissioned Officer of the Year:** Staff Sgt. Christopher Cook, 151st Mission Support Group
- **Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year:** Master Sgt. Shatiece Werner, 151st Air Refueling Wing
- **First Sgt. of the Year:** Master Sgt. Rik Ombach, 151st Mission Support Group
- **Honor Guard Member of the Year:** Tech Sgt. Thomas Belgrade, 169th Intelligence Squadron
- **Company Grade Officer of the Year:** Capt. Jesse Barber, 151st Mission Support Group
- **Field Grade Officer of the Year:** Maj. Sasha Perronne, 151st Mission Support Group
- **Civilian of the Year:** Ms. Jackie Ezell, 151st Mission Support Group

In addition to the individual categories, an award for Outstanding Team of the Year was given to the Honor Flight Team. This team was responsible for honoring America's veterans for all of their sacrifices by assisting with the transport of our heroes to Washington D.C. to visit their memorials.

Senior NCO award winner, Master Sgt. Shatiece Werner, 151st ARW Inspector General Superintendent, has served in the Utah Air National Guard for 10 years. This is the second time she has been selected as the SNCO of the year.

"I am very humbled and appreciative to have received the award and although the award has my name on it I did not earn it alone," said Werner. "The recognition actually belongs to my daughter and those who have supported me along the way."



Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Annie Edwards



The Utah Air National Guard presented awards for outstanding achievement in eight different categories during the 2016 Airmen of the Year awards banquet held at the Utah Cultural Center in West Valley, Utah on Jan. 21, 2017.

Utah Air Guard Unveils New Logo

SALT LAKE CITY — **A**fter celebrating its 70th anniversary, the Utah Air National Guard unveiled a new logo in December of 2016, featuring the phrase "Mountain West Militia" and the National Guard Minuteman in front of snow covered mountains.

"Although many of the units have their own individual logos or patches, the Utah Air National Guard has never had a logo or a central theme to cover the entire organization," said Col. Daniel Boyack, vice wing commander of the 151st Air Refueling Wing.

Boyack said that because the Utah Air Guard has so many different missions and commands, it has the tendency to become somewhat fragmented. Because of this, he encouraged the development of a new emblem or theme that could include all of the units here.

"We wanted to come up with something that united everyone, a group identity that everyone in the Utah Air Guard could be a part of," he said.

Boyack added that the term Mountain West Militia has been used by the UTANG crew chiefs in the past and he asked for their permission to use the name for a logo for the entire Utah group before proceeding with design ideas.

The Minuteman and concept of a Mountain West Militia is an important part of honoring our heritage as citizen Soldiers of the past and present, said Boyack.

Tech. Sgt. Amber Monio, 151st ARW, photojournalist, designed the new insignia after working with leadership and other Utah Air Guard members

to come up with ideas for the logo. Monio said Boyack approached her with the project, wanting to create something for Utah that would be recognizable.

“I wanted to design something that represented our state and community,” said Monio. “Incorporating the Minuteman pays tribute to our volunteer force, while the mountains represent the iconic Wasatch Mountain Range along the Salt Lake Valley.”

The new logo has already been used around the base. In addition it will be painted on one of the aircraft hangars and incorporated in a new design to be painted on the tail of one of the KC-135R Stratotankers. “It was an honor to have the opportunity to work on this project and help create something Airmen in the Utah Air Guard will identify with for years to come,” she said. 🇺🇸

Story by Tech. Sgt. Annie Edwards



130th EIS Airmen Recognized for Outstanding Achievement with McClelland Award

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — Ten Airmen from the 130th Engineering Installation Squadron received national recognition with a Lieutenant General Harold M. McClelland Award for their work in 2016 as part of the group responsible for the relocation project at the Joint Space Operations Center in Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

Brig. Gen. Kirk Pierce, Director of Operations for the National Guard Bureau, announced the Air National Guard winners of the General John P. Jumper Awards for Excellence in Warfighting Integration and AF Information Dominance in the individual, team and unit categories.

“The exceptional accomplishment of our Airmen emphasize the unrelenting distinction the ANG exhibits in handling cyberspace operations and supporting missions,” said Pierce.

The McClelland Award recognizes outstanding achievement in the unit category.

The Utah Guardsmen provided leadership and installation support that was instrumental in the relocation of the Launch and Test Range Systems. The 1950s era LTRS received upgraded cyber infrastructure and was moved from one building to another. The move also allowed the headquarters and operation elements to be housed in the same location.

Acting as the on-site leadership, the 130th personnel worked with 50 other Air National Guard members over an eight month time period to accomplish the relocation which was designated a top priority by Air Force Space Command. The project was completed in half of the time originally projected and saved the government over \$5.1 million dollars.

Capt. Brian Herrscher, 130th EIS officer in charge of engineering, was the on-site project manager for the relocation project. Herrscher was responsible for coordinating the efforts of the active duty personnel, Air Guard members, and contractors to accomplish the move on schedule.

“The project had many unique challenges where we were working with active duty military, civilian government workers and contractors,” said Herrscher. “Finding the right resources when working with so many diverse groups made this a really challenging and rewarding process.”

The relocation team fabricated, labeled and tested over 10,000 cables, relocated 500 pieces of sensitive equipment, and coordinated the move of 250 racks of communication equipment.

Herrscher said the most rewarding part of working on this project was the opportunity to identify creative solutions to solve complex problems and remove roadblocks in order to keep the project moving forward. 🇺🇸

Story by Tech. Sgt. Annie Edwards

Airmen with the 130th Engineering Installation Squadron were awarded an Air National Guard Lt. Gen. Harold M. McClelland award for their work in 2016 as part of the group responsible for a Launch and Test Range Systems relocation project at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.



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SERGEANT MAJOR

Shepherd Eric Douglas

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